

Alabama Guardsman

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Exercise to train nation's new, existing response forces

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CAMP ATTERBURY, Indiana – United States Army North is poised to conduct the largest confirmation exercise to date for 9,000 members of the Defense Department's chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear response force in and around Camp Atterbury, Ind.

Exercise Vibrant Response 2013 begins July 25 and will confirm the ability of the three dedicated federal military task forces to organize and employ life-saving and life-sustaining capabilities following a catastrophic CBRN incident.

"The Alabama National Guard will once again confirm our ability to respond in the event of a catastrophic incident," said Maj. Gen. Perry G. Smith, Alabama National Guard adjutant general. "We would like to think that a catastrophic event will never happen. Unfortunately we all know the realities.

Alabama Guardsman

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Contributed/photo

MUSCATATUCK URBAN TRAINING COMPLEX, Ind. —Air National Guard Fatality Search and Recovery Team members collect a simulated casualty from a collapsed parking garage here Aug. 18, 2011

That said, we will be prepared."

The rigorous exercise will use 11 training areas and airfields spread across 5,000 square miles in southern Indiana and northern Kentucky. During the 19-day training window, Army North will conduct 200 live events at 50 venues and an additional 250 events will occur within a dynamic, computer-simulated environment.

"We will have 350 medical mannequins and 300 civilian role-players to portray injured residents," said

Al Garcia of Army North's training directorate. "Along with damaged buildings, rubble piles, wrecked vehicles, smoke and flame effects, they create an incredibly realistic environment for training."

This will be the first confirmation exercise for Joint Task Force – Guardian, which was created as part of a two-year long transformation of the military's homeland CBRN Response Enterprise. This force, comprised of
(Please see **EXERCISE**, page 6)

On the Cover

Members of the 20th Special Forces Group (Airborne) completed several proficiency jumps from a CH-47 Chinook helicopter in Gadsden, Alabama. These Soldiers leapt from the aircraft at approximately 1200 ft. and navigated their parachutes safely to the drop zone below. (photo by Spc. Brenda Thomas).

Adjutant General

New mission reminds us of safety



**Maj. Gen.
Perry Smith**

Soon, approximately 1,500 Alabama National Guardsmen will load into more than 500 military vehicles and convoy up I-65 to Camp Atterbury, Ind., to take

part in Vibrant Response 13, an exercise with more than 9,000 servicemembers and civilians exercising response to a catastrophic event. There is a lot that

can go wrong when you move that many vehicles and personnel that far, especially in the summer heat. However, the 31st CBRN Brigade has been doing an outstanding job at planning and preparing for this historic move. I want to personally commend the Soldiers of the 31st and Brig. Gen. Brown on all the great preparation they have made so far.

Don't be fooled into thinking that the same problems that face this convoy can't also face you as you perhaps travel a long distance for a family vacation or other trip this summer. Just as the 31st is spending a lot of time, effort and

money to ensure they will arrive safely and mission-capable, you should do the same in your personal life.

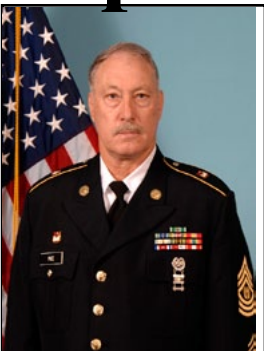
We have lost several Guardsmen to accidents already this year. We can't afford to lose any more. Take the time to prepare yourself for whatever "mission" you have personally this summer.

As we are in the height of annual training season, I want to emphasize that what makes the Alabama National Guard great – what makes this state great – is people. You are not just a number, a uniform, a body, a slot-

(Please see **SAFETY**, page 7)

State Command Sergeant Major

Steps for staying safe from the summer sun



**Command Sgt.
Maj.
Eddie Pike**

Most people like to get a little sun. Its warmth and light can relax us and boost our spirits. But the benefits come with dangerous tradeoffs. Each year more than 3.5 million cases of skin cancer

are diagnosed in the US, over 90 percent of which are caused by the sun's ultraviolet rays (UVR). Similarly, most of the skin damage that is associated with aging – wrinkles, sagging, leather-

ing, and discoloration – is UVR related. This damage is cumulative; it adds up over years. So, when you venture out into the sun, be smart about it. Protect yourself from UV rays. Too much sunlight can be dangerous.

It isn't possible or practical to avoid sunlight completely, and it would be unwise to reduce your level of activity to avoid the outdoors because physical activity is vital to good health. Take steps to limit exposure to UV rays. Some people think about sun protection only when they spend a day at the beach, pool, or lake. We should think sun-safety every day, year round.

Cover up. When out in the sun, wear clothing to protect as much skin as pos-

sible. Clothes provide different levels of UV protection. Long-sleeved shirts, long pants, or long skirts that cover the most skin are the most protective. Dark colors provide more protection than light colors and dry fabric is more protective than wet fabric. If you can see light through a fabric, UV rays can get through. Bright colors such as red and orange also provide good protection.

Use sunscreen. A sunscreen is a product that is applied to the skin for protection from UV rays. But it is important to know that sunscreen does not provide total protection against all rays. The American Academy of Dermatology recommends products with a sun (Please see **SUN**, page 7)

Snap Shots

A look at some of the recent highlights from the Alabama National Guard



Jamie Brown/photo

Sgt. 1st Class Steven Davis of the 231st Military Police Battalion, a veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom, is recognized at the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) annual Veteran's Recognition and Appreciation program July 27th at the Alabama State Capitol Auditorium. Helping honor Davis are (from left to right): ADECA Chairman Jim Byard, Jr., Congressman Spencer Bachus from the sixth district of Alabama and Alabama State Senator Bryan Taylor. The program honored Alabama's veterans.



Brenda Thomas/photo

A group of Guardsmen's children play a friendly game of soccer on the lawn in front of the Alabama National Guard Headquarters. "This is a day camp focusing on sports," said Kelli Hill, Child & Youth Program coordinator. "It's teaching the kids about leadership, making healthy choices and working together as a team."



Brenda Thomas/photo

1152nd and 1153rd Firefighting Teams conduct rope and ladder climbing as well as a sewer rescue on July 25th during annual training at Pelham Range, Ala.. The units are preparing for their role in Joint Task Force - Guardian (please see story on page 2).



Brenda Thomas/photo

The National Guard and the NFL have joined forces to create the High School Player Development Program. This program helps develop leadership and teamwork skills in these student-athletes. A day camp was held in Oxford, Ala., for 548 high school football players, July 26, 2012.



Steve Hardy/photo

Soldiers from the 1-117th Field Artillery Battalion complete the hookup of their M777A2, 155-mm, Lightweight Howitzer to B Company, 169th Aviation's CH-47 helicopter at Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center, Camp Shelby, Miss.



Brenda Thomas/photo

July 12 marked the 94th birthday of the U.S. Army Warrant Officer Corps. CW5 Dean, the command chief warrant officer of Alabama, cuts the cake with a saber along side Warrant Officer Haynes, the youngest warrant officer present, and Chief Warrant Officer 5 Sasser, the eldest.

(EXERCISE continued from page 2)

National Guard units from Alabama, Florida and Kentucky, expects to conduct the largest domestic convoy in its history when traveling to the exercise on Aug. 5-6. Smith said that he had no doubt that the Alabama National Guard had the finest task force, commander, officers and noncommissioned officers which would ensure, with their training and preparation, a well-executed convoy and exercise.

Also training during Vibrant Response 13 are two other response forces, commanded by Army North's Joint Task Force – Civil Support, which is based at Fort Eustis, Va., and Task Force 51, which is based at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. All told, units from 25 states and Puerto Rico will be training in the event.

A number of state and federal agencies are also participating, including various National Guard units and teams from the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the National Technical Nuclear Forensics Task Force.

The Defense Department began trans-

forming the nation's military CBRN response force in 2010 in order to bring more life-saving and life-sustaining capabilities more rapidly to assist civil authorities in responding to a catastrophic incident.

Beginning in 2010, Army North, as the Army component of U.S. Northern Command, analyzed the existing federal response forces and proposed a structure that increased critical assets such as aviation, medical, engineering, logistics and decontamination capabilities – in some cases, adding 3 to 5 times more capability.

Various National Guard elements were also created during the transformation. Nine additional CBRN Enhanced Response Force Packages and 10 Homeland Response Forces were located in regions throughout the United States in order to arrive more rapidly with critical life-saving capabilities. Some of these forces also will train during Vibrant Response 13.

Army North began the Vibrant Response series of exercises in 2008. Planning and conducting the exercise is part of the command's mission to train the nation's military

CBRN response capability.

The 850 training support personnel have more than 1,500 years of combined experience, said Daryl Kinman, of Army North's training directorate.

"These are subject-matter experts, sripters, trainers and advisors, who come from a range of public, military and corporate organizations involved in consequence management at all levels – local, state and federal," Kinman said.

In support of Vibrant Response 13, Army North coordinated a large movement of equipment and personnel. This includes 68 military chartered flights and the movement of more than 2,200 pieces of equipment (100,000 short tons), comprising approximately 1,000 ground vehicles, 30 helicopters and 950 truckloads of equipment.

"Training at this level continues to demonstrate the strength and resilience of the Alabama National Guard," said Smith. "We train hard so that we can live up to the National Guard's motto - always ready, always there."



Pfc. Taylor Holifield of the 1151st Engineer Co. cuts boards which will be used to construct a soffit, which bridges the gap between a structure's siding and the roofline. This is part of his annual training with the 877th Engineer Battalion at Pelham Range, Ala. (Photo by Brenda Thomas)

(SAFETY continued from page 2)

filler. Supervisors should never think of their Soldiers and Airmen in this way. Let us remember to protect our people using a good safety program.

In today's military environment of metrics and color-coded scorecards, MOSQ percentages, graphs and

(SUN continued from page 2)

protection factor (SPF) of at least 30. The SPF number represents the level of protection against UV rays—a higher number means more protection. Apply sunscreen generously, ideally, about one ounce to cover the arms, legs, neck, and face of the average adult, and reapply every two hours.

Wear a hat. A hat with at least a 2 to 3-inch brim all around is ideal because it protects the ears, eyes, nose, neck, and scalp that are exposed to the sun. A baseball cap can protect the front and top of the head, but not the neck or ears where skin cancers commonly develop.

Wear sunglasses that block UV rays. UV-

charts; it is imperative to remember that those things are tools – tools to help us become and remain mission-capable. Let us not forget that people make up our units – individuals with individual goals, strengths, weaknesses, backgrounds and problems.

blocking sunglasses are important for protecting the delicate skin around the eyes, as well as the eyes themselves. Research has shown that long hours in the sun without protecting the eyes increases chances of eye diseases. Large-framed and wraparound sunglasses are more likely to protect the eyes from light coming in from different angles. Children need smaller versions of real, protective adult sunglasses—not toy sunglasses.

Children need special attention, since they tend to spend more time outdoors, can burn more easily, and may not be aware of the dangers. So teach children early about the importance of protecting their skin and eyes

If we remember to treat each person individually with respect – regardless of rank, gender, race, age – we will grow even stronger as a National Guard organization. More importantly, we will all be better human beings. Lead from the front!

from the sun.

Getting out to the outdoors is fun for everyone. We all look forward to the summer months to go to the beach, the pool, or the lake. We must protect ourselves from the dangers of over-exposure to the sun. Skin cancer is one of the most common ailments seen throughout the medical system.

“Slip, slop, slap, and wrap.” Slip on a shirt; slop on sunscreen; slap on a hat; wrap on sunglasses. These steps complement each other, and they provide the best protection when used together.

(From the American Skin Cancer Foundation)

Alabama National Guard Social Media Policy

All Alabama National Guard entities requesting a social media presence (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.) must comply with the ALNG Social Media Policy. Entities include all parts of this organization from MACOM down to the unit level, all Family Readiness Groups, and also individuals operating in a Guard capacity (ie. recruiters, career counselors).

For help, please contact the ALNG Public Affairs Office:
int-paoal@ng.army.mil
334-271-7244

Social Media is a great tool for networking, marketing, and keeping up with friends. It is important to be aware of what information you are putting out in the public, and who has access to it. Think before you post!

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